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 Guide to identifying deciduous broadleaved trees in winter (code 258)

Tree Name Trail fold-out chart (code OP51)

Field Studies Council
www.field-studies-council.org/publications

ispot
www.ispot.org.uk

OPAL identification guides
www.OPALexploration.org/identification

More information about identifying trees
 This guide looks at 22 of some of the most common trees in Britain. If you are unable to find a match, you may want to use a different guide.

The OPAL Tree Health Survey

Tree Guide

BOX 1. Conifers and broadleaved trees

Trees can be divided into two main groups: conifers and broadleaved trees. Conifers have leaves which are either scale-like or long and needle-like.



Broadleaved trees have wide flat leaves.



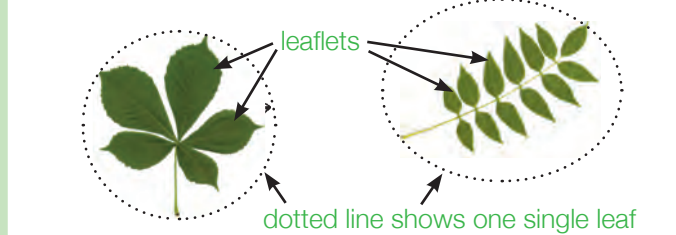
The OPAL Tree Health Survey is for broadleaved trees only.

BOX 2. Simple leaves and compound leaves

A simple leaf is a single leaf attached to a stalk.



A compound leaf is made up of several leaflets.



There is no bud at the base of individual leaflets, only at the base of the stalk of the whole leaf.

BOX 3. Pinnate leaves and palmate leaves

In a pinnate leaf, the veins spread from several places along the leaf stalk.

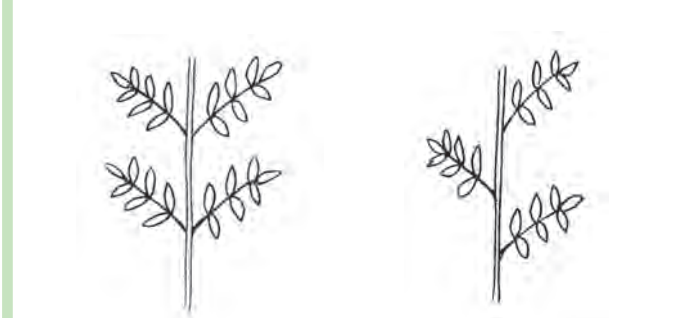
In a palmate leaf, the veins spread from a single point at the top of the leaf stalk.



Pinnate leaves

Palmate leaves

BOX 4. Opposite pairs and alternate pairs



Opposite pairs

Alternate pairs

If the leaves are in opposite pairs, each pair of leaves grows from a single place on the stem.

If the leaves are in alternate pairs, each leaf grows from a different place on the stem.

START HERE

Does the tree have needles or scale-like leaves? (BOX 1)

YES → **Conifers**

If you have found a conifer, choose another tree for the OPAL Tree Health Survey

NO

Does the tree have simple leaves? (BOX 2)

YES → **Horse Chestnut**

NO

Do all the leaflets grow from the end of the stalk?

YES → **Horse Chestnut**

NO

Does the leaf have two or three pairs of leaflets?

YES → **Elder**

Check: Elder leaves release a pungent smell when you rub them

NO

Do the leaves grow in opposite pairs on the twig? (BOX 4)

YES → **Ash**

Check: Ash has black buds

NO

Rowan

Check: Rowan never has black buds like Ash. Rowan leaflets are deeper toothed than Ash. Look out for red berries on Rowan in autumn.

BOX 5. Lobed leaves and unlobed leaves

Lobes are large projections at the edge of the leaf.



Unlobed leaf

Lobed leaves

BOX 6. Toothed leaf edges

Teeth are small projections at the edge of the leaf.



double-toothed leaf edge

toothed leaf edge

Do the leaves have lobes? (BOX 5)

YES → **Oak**

NO

Is the leaf at least twice as long as it is wide?

YES → **London Plane**

NO

Does the leaf have a toothed edge? (BOX 6)

YES → **Hawthorn**

NO

Are there fine white hairs on the edge of the leaf?

YES → **Beech**

Check: Beech leaves have a wavy edge

NO

Does the leaf have a blunt or rounded tip?

YES → **Alder**

NO

Willow

Oak

NO

Are the twigs thorny?

YES → **Hawthorn**

NO

Are the leaves palmate? (BOX 3)

YES → **Maple**

NO



London Plane

NO

Do the leaves grow in opposite pairs?

YES → **Maple**

NO

Does the leaf have a toothed edge? (BOX 6)

YES → **Sycamore**

NO



Willow

NO

Are there 2 red spots at the top of the leaf stalk?

YES → **Cherry**

Cherry leaves have a wide range of sizes

NO

Does the edge of the leaf have large teeth?

YES → **Sweet Chestnut**

Check: Sweet Chestnut leaves do not have 2 red spots at the top of the leaf stalk

NO

Is the leaf shorter than 10 cm?

YES

Is the edge of the leaf double toothed? (BOX 6)

YES → **Hornbeam**

NO

Does the bud grow on a stalk?

YES → **Crab Apple**

NO

Is the leaf stalk flattened?

YES → **Poplar**

NO

Does the leaf bulge out more one side?

YES → **Lime**

NO

Cherry

Cherry leaves have a wide range of sizes

Crab Apple

YES

Whitebeam

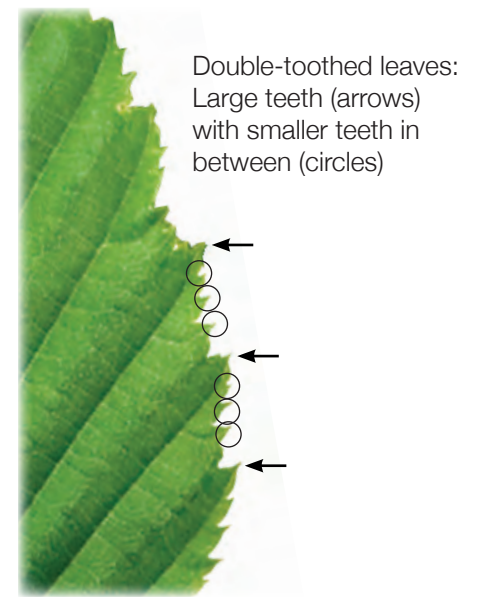
YES

Hazel

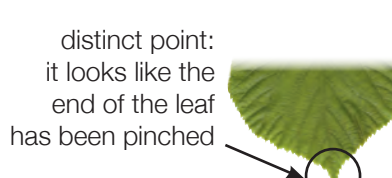
NO

Birch

Check you are looking at Birch not Alder. Alder has a rounded leaf tip, while Birch has a pointed leaf tip (see overleaf)



Double-toothed leaves: Large teeth (arrows) with smaller teeth in between (circles)



distinct point: it looks like the end of the leaf has been pinched

Check: Hazel leaves and leaf stems are hairy